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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 001653

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/27/2016

TAGS: PREL KWBG KPAL IS POV ISRAELI PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: ISRAELIS REJECT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IDEA

PROPOSED BY ABBAS

REF: A) TEL AVIV 1470 B) TEL AVIV 1628

Classified By: Political Counselor Norman Olsen; Reasons: 1.4 (B and D)

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1. (U) Reacting to a speech by PA President Mahmud Abbas in Oslo, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's press spokesperson told reporters on April 26 that Israel flatly rejects calls for an international conference to facilitate Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. "That's a no with a capital 'N'," said the spokesperson. He added that "the summit is part of the second phase of the Roadmap. Chairman Abbas has tried repeatedly to skip the first phase of the Roadmap which obliges the Palestinians to stop terrorism."

2. (C) The spokesperson's rejection of the proposal is in line with what Olmert and FM Tzipi Livni have been telling the USG. In a recent meeting with Senator Lieberman, Olmert assessed the chances of the Palestinians taking the steps necessary to restart negotiations as "nonexistent" (reftel A). Foreign Policy Adviser Shalom Tourgeman told the Ambassador that the GOI would have no substantive discussions with Abbas. FM Livni was likely aware of Abbas' plans when she complained to Representative Shays on April 20 that Abbas wants to skip to the final stage of the Roadmap and talk about final status issues, without taking action against terrorism (reftel B). Livni has repeatedly advocated the continued isolation of Hamas and the PA.

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JONES